

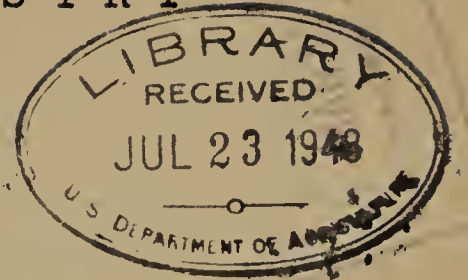
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BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY  
ADMINISTRATIVE NOTES AND NEWS.



Issued  
November 14, 1911.

An index will be prepared every six months of these circulars in order to make them available for easy reference.

THE PROJECT COMMITTEE.

A change has recently been made in the personnel of the Committee on Projects, the letter making the change reading as follows:

"Dr. N. A. Cobb, September 21, 1911.  
Acting Assistant Chief of Bureau.

Dear Dr. Cobb:

You are hereby appointed Chairman of the Project Committee, of which you have been Acting Chairman for some time. Your associates on this Committee will be Messrs. Corbett, Scofield, Orton, Garner, and Knapp, any one of whom you will please delegate to act in your place when you are not presiding.

Messrs. Scofield and Orton will act with you as a Sub-Committee on Administration of Field Work, and Messrs. Waite, Spillman, Stubenrauch, True, and Swingle will act as advisory members of the Project Committee. I am advising each of the men mentioned of his appointment as above outlined.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) B. T. Galloway,

Chief of Bureau.

The duties of the Committee on Projects, as outlined in the letter first appointing it and in subsequent ones, are -

"To consider the various projects submitted by the several offices of the Bureau, determine their relationships and take such action as may be necessary to avoid overlapping or duplication of work, also to consider and act upon suggestions made by Chief of the Bureau in the matter of readjusting and regrouping projects and to make recommendations."

In order to avoid duplication or overlapping of work, it is very important that an outline of any proposed new line of work be submitted to the Committee BEFORE ANY WORK IS DONE UPON IT; in fact any other course of action is directly contrary to the policy of the Bureau and to the instructions of the Chief of the Bureau.





## METHOD OF OBTAINING BIDS IN THE FIELD.

Signed bids should always be used.

Recently three bids were sent in by one of the field laboratories for the construction of certain cabinets. None of these bids was on the regular Departmental form for informal bids, one of them consisting merely of a telegram from the officer in charge of the laboratory, giving the name of the firm and the price. This latter bid was the lowest and a recommendation was made to the Board of Awards that it be accepted. The Board of Awards accepted the bid, but in doing so stated:

"The award is, however, made conditionally on this firm submitting their bid in the usual manner for proper recording and filing. \* \* \*

"There being regular forms provided by the Department for obtaining bids which are in general use in and out of Washington, and which may be obtained in quantity, signed by the Disbursing Officer, it is requested that the members of the Bureau of Plant Industry at the different stations throughout the country be supplied with them; the subject matter will then be presented alike to bidder and to the Board of Awards, and will probably tend toward expediting business at your end and with the Board."

It is very important that heads of offices should see that the officers in charge of field stations, who have to purchase materials, etc., through competition, are furnished with an ample supply of the signed forms in question for use in all cases where such bids are necessary, thus avoiding the difficulty which has arisen in the instance referred to. Upon securing the bids the field officer should forward them to the Washington office with his recommendation as to which should be accepted, in order that prompt action may be had.

It should be noted that the officer calling for such informal bids in the field should follow the regular procedure of having the bids formally opened at a stated time in order that no question can possibly be raised by disappointed bidders.

## COOPERATIVE EXPERIMENTAL WORK.

A complete card index of all of the cooperative work being conducted by the Bureau has recently been compiled and filed in the office of the Chief. These cards are arranged by State and by office. The following information is shown on them:

- (1) Office carrying on the work; (2) Location of work;
- (3) Name of cooperating agency; (4) Date work was inaugurated;
- (5) Nature of the experiment or work; (6) Nature of cooperation--
- (a) Contribution by Bureau, and (b) Contribution by cooperating





agency; (7) Whether work is conducted under a formal agreement or otherwise; (8) Date of the last agreement; and (9) Annual cost to the Bureau.

This index is kept in Room 223 and is accessible to all the members of the Bureau force. A revision will be made twice a year in order to keep it up to date.

#### OUTLINES OF ORGANIZATION.

Recently the Bureau was called upon to submit an outline of organization to the President's Commission on Economy and Efficiency. The letter from the Commission calling for the information, which was transmitted through the Departmental Committee on Economy and Efficiency, stated in part:

"The purpose of these outlines is to show the whole machinery for the entire government, legislative, judicial, and executive, in such a way as to indicate, not only every working unit into which the Government is organized for the performance of its work, but the relations of such units to each other, as regards direct lines of administrative authority. By unit of organization is meant, not merely such formal organizations as bureaus, divisions, and sections, but all further subdivisions which comprehend reasonably distinct groups of employees for the performance of special duties. \* \* \* Thus the scheme contemplates, as one of its most essential features, the indication of everything in the nature of a shop, laboratory, photographic gallery, blue print room, depot, and the like, and every point in the field at which a station is being maintained, or work being conducted by or under the direction of the Government.

"It is only as information of this character is secured that it becomes possible to examine into the extent to which there are a number of units of the same character or performing the same functions, and thus determine whether duplication or overlapping exists within the services of the same bureau or department or within the Government as a whole. \* \* \* \*

It being the opinion of the Departmental Committee on Economy and Efficiency that photographic dark rooms, as well as the machine shop in the Physical Laboratory should be separately shown, these were included in the first outline submitted under the respective offices. Later the outline was returned by the Commission for any revision the Bureau might think advisable. In the letter transmitting the corrected outline, the Chief of the Bureau stated:

"I have indicated certain changes which are necessary to bring the statement into accord with the conditions as they exist. These changes consist mainly in the elimination from the outline of certain minor features of quarters and equipment, (dark rooms, etc.) which if left as designated in the outline would appear as distinct





working units. As a matter of fact they were merely features of equipment, utilized by those engaged in scientific investigation, exactly as desks, file cases, and similar conveniences are used in routine executive and clerical work. \* \* \*

"In connection with this statement of organization it should be clearly understood that the clerical work in this Bureau, aside from that included under General Administration, is merely incidental to the scientific work, and in many cases not capable of physical separation or actual segregation in the form of distinct administrative units. It should also be understood that for the effective prosecution of research work with crop plants, which makes up a large part of the work of this Bureau, many of the problems under consideration require that the same investigator shall pursue to a considerable extent both the field and laboratory phases of the work. The divisions into traveling and laboratory forces (This division was called for by the Committee) do not therefore represent distinct administrative units.

As many of the problems under investigation are complex and many-sided, their prompt solution frequently requires simultaneous attack from different angles and from different points of view. With work of this character, it is manifestly impossible to so chart or outline it as to accurately show the details of organization or procedure in such a way as can readily be done for routine administrative, executive, clerical, or police work. To be effective the organization must be continuously subject to readjustment and re-alignment, as found necessary, to conform to changing problems, conditions and personnel. Our type of organization is as indicated, that of divisions into groups of workers who are charged with the duty of prosecuting certain types of investigation, authorized by law through the Appropriation Act. Within and between these groups there is maintained continuous, though changing, cooperative relation in such a way as appears most certain to secure prompt and accurate results. Any lessening of the flexibility which has been found so effective in such work through arbitrary subdivision into rigid parts as the result of legislation or other action would be certain to seriously impair the working efficiency of this Bureau. The present form of organization is that of a living, active organism, and to effectively handle the character of problems that we meet, the present form of organization, or one very similar to it, appears essential."

#### AGRICULTURE EXTENSION AND DEMONSTRATION WORK.

Some of the members of the Bureau force may be interested in four bills which have recently been introduced in Congress which are designed to greatly enlarge the scope of agricultural activities throughout the United States, particularly along the lines of agricultural education and demonstration. A comparison





of these three bills has been prepared under the direction of the Chief of the Bureau by Mr. Bradley, showing the funds involved under each and other important features. These are interesting in view of the present agitation on the part of the business interests of a number of the Western States looking to the extension of demonstration work among farmers, which has resulted in the organization of a Soil Fertility League, with headquarters at Chicago. Any one desiring to look into the matter further may consult a copy of the full data in Room 210.

#### PREPARATION OF MANUSCRIPT.

Mr. Rockwell has prepared a very useful memorandum relative to the preparation of manuscript. The instructions are not only valuable to stenographers, but also to authors. Copies of the memorandum may be obtained from Mr. Rockwell at any time.

#### PREPARATION OF CORRESPONDENCE.

There is a noticeable lack of uniformity in the letters emanating from the Bureau, particularly in letters prepared in the various offices for the signature of the Chief of the Bureau and the Secretary. A memorandum has been prepared outlining the proper form for such letters, as approved by the Chief of the Bureau, a copy of which should be in the hands of every stenographer in the Bureau. Copies of the memorandum may be secured from Rooms 206 or 223.

#### DISPOSITION OF CROPS GROWN EXPERIMENTALLY.

There appears to be some misunderstanding regarding the disposition of crops grown experimentally by the Bureau. A recent case will illustrate the point. A plot of twenty acres was rented by the Bureau and planted to a certain crop, the seed and expenses of planting and caring for the crop for the first two or three months being borne by the Bureau. Desiring to be relieved of the necessity for furnishing the labor etc., for the remainder of the season, the question was raised as to whether an arrangement could be entered into with a cooperating agency whereby the cooperator would furnish the labor for the balance of the season, to be paid for out of the sale of the crop, any balance remaining from the sale of the crop after paying for the labor to be left in the hands of the cooperator to cover the cost of labor next spring in connection with further experiments.

Any such arrangement, it is believed, would not be lawful, as the crop in such case would be the property of the Govern-





ment having been grown on Government land (held under lease), and when disposed of, the money would have to be turned into the Treasury in accordance with the law (Revised Statutes 316, 317, and 318).

An entirely different situation arises where under an agreement the cooperating agency agrees to furnish the land, labor, etc., in consideration for receiving seed, advice, and direction from the Bureau. In such an instance the products grown are not the property of the Government, hence there is no difficulty as to their disposition.

It is highly advisable in all cases where cooperative experiments are to be carried on, to have a definite memorandum of understanding before the inauguration of the work and thus avoid any difficulties that might otherwise arise.

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(Prepared under direction of Chief of Bureau.)

